

Reading SAT Practice Test 25

Q1. This passage is excerpted from the 1854 book *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau, which details Thoreau's experience living in a cabin alone for two years.

I think that I love society as much as most, and am ready enough to fasten myself like a bloodsucker for the time to any full-blooded man that comes in my way. I am naturally no hermit, (5) but might possibly sit out the sturdiest frequenter for the bar-room, if my business called me thither.

I had three chairs in my house; one for solitude, two for friendship, three for society. When visitors come in larger and unexpected (10) numbers there was but the third chair for them all, but they generally economized the room by standing up. It is surprising how many great men and women a small house will contain. I have had twenty-five or thirty souls, with their bodies, (15) at once under my roof, and yet we often parted without being aware that we had come very near to one another.

One inconvenience I sometimes experienced in so small a house, the difficulty of getting to a (20) sufficient distance from my guest when we began to utter the big thoughts in big words. You want room for your thoughts to get into sailing trim and run a course or two before they make their port. The bullet of your thought must have (25) overcome its lateral and ricochet motion and fallen into its last and steady course before it reaches the ear of the hearer, else it may plow out again through the side of his head. Also our sentences wanted room to unfold and form (30) their columns in the interval. Individuals, like nations, must have suitable broad and natural boundaries, even a considerable neutral ground, between them. I have found it a singular luxury to talk across the pond to a companion on the (35) opposite side. In my house we were so near that we could not begin to hear—we could not speak low enough to be heard; as when you throw two stones into calm water so near that they break each other's undulations. As the conversation (40) began to assume a loftier and grander tone, we gradually shoved our chairs farther apart till they touched the wall in opposite corners and then commonly there was not room enough.

My "best" room, however, my withdrawing (45) room, always ready for company, on whose carpet the sun rarely fell, was the pine wood behind my house. Thither in summer days, when distinguished guests came, I took them, and a priceless domestic swept the floor and dusted the (50) furniture and kept the things in order.

If one guest came he sometimes partook of my frugal meal, and it was no interruption to conversation to be stirring a hasty-pudding or watching the rising and maturing of a loaf of (55) bread in the ashes, in the meanwhile. But if twenty came and sat in my house there was nothing said about dinner, though there might be bread enough for two, more than if eating were a forsaken habit; but we naturally practised (60) abstinence; and this was never felt to be an offence against hospitality, but the most proper and considerate course. The waste and decay of physical life, which so often needs repair, seemed miraculously retarded in such a case, and the vital (65) vigor stood its ground. I could entertain thus a thousand as well as twenty; and if any ever went away disappointed or hungry from my house when they found me at home, they may depend upon it that I sympathized with them at least. So (70) easy it is, though many

housekeepers doubt it, to establish new and better customs in the place of the old. You need not rest your reputation on the dinners you give.

As for men, they will hardly fail one (75) anywhere. I had more visitors while I lived in the woods than at any other period in my life; I mean that I had some. I met several there under more favorable circumstances than I could anywhere else. But fewer came to see me on trivial business. (80) In this respect, my company was winnowed by my mere distance from town. I had withdrawn so far within the great ocean of solitude, into which the rivers of society empty, that for the most part, so far as my needs were concerned, only the finest (85) sediment was deposited around me.

1. The main narrative point of view in the passage is of

- (A) a man adjusting to life in a big city after growing up on a farm.
- (B) a discussion of visitors to a small house away from city life.
- (C) a sailor discussing the pond on which he grew up and how it affected his friendships.
- (D) a man discussing the potential of big thoughts and their need to be expressed.

2. In the context of the passage, the phrase "as when you throw two stones into calm water so near they break each other's undulations," (lines 37–39) is best described as

- (A) a reference to the author's childhood days when he threw stones into a lake.
- (B) an analogy used to elaborate on a previous statement.
- (C) a way to expand on the reasons national boundaries are always changing.
- (D) a reason that the author and his companion had to continually move their chairs to be heard.

3. As used in line 27, "plow" most nearly means

- (A) push.
- (B) furrow.
- (C) cultivate.
- (D) walk.

Q2. This passage is a collection of excerpts from the dissenting opinion written by Justice Antonin Scalia in response to the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in the case of *Obergefell v. Hodges*, which found that the Constitution requires states to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

[June 26, 2015]

JUSTICE SCALIA, with whom JUSTICE THOMAS joins, dissenting.

I join THE CHIEF JUSTICE's opinion in full. I write separately to call attention to this Court's threat to American democracy.

The substance of today's decree is not of immense personal importance to me. The law can recognize as marriage whatever sexual attachments and living arrangements it wishes, and can accord them favorable civil consequences, from tax treatment to rights of inheritance. Those civil consequences—and the public approval that conferring the name of marriage evidences—can perhaps have adverse social effects, but no more adverse than the effects of many other controversial laws. So it is not of special importance to me what the law says about marriage. It is of overwhelming importance, however, who it is that rules me. Today's decree says that my Ruler, and the Ruler of 320 million Americans coast-to-coast, is a majority of the nine lawyers on the Supreme Court. The opinion in these cases is the furthest extension in fact—and the furthest extension one can even imagine—of the Court's claimed power to create "liberties" that the Constitution and its Amendments neglect to mention. This practice of constitutional revision by an unelected committee of nine, always accompanied (as it is today) by extravagant praise of liberty, robs the People of the most important liberty they asserted in the Declaration of Independence and won in the Revolution of 1776: the freedom to govern themselves. . .

It would be surprising to find a prescription regarding marriage in the Federal Constitution since, as the author of today's opinion reminded us only two years ago (in an opinion joined by the same Justices who join him today):

"[R]egulation of domestic relations is an area that has long been regarded as a virtually exclusive province of the States."

"[T]he Federal Government, through our history, has deferred to state-law policy decisions with respect to domestic relations. . ."

Thus, rather than focusing on the People's understanding of "liberty"—at the time of ratification or even today—the majority focuses on four "principles and traditions" that, in the majority's view, prohibit States from defining marriage as an institution consisting of one man and one woman.

This is a naked judicial claim to legislative—indeed, super-legislative—power; a claim fundamentally at odds with our system of government. Except as limited by a constitutional prohibition agreed to by the People, the States are free to adopt whatever laws they like, even those that offend the esteemed Justices' "reasoned judgment." A system of government that makes the People subordinate to a committee of nine unelected lawyers does not deserve to be called a democracy.

Judges are selected precisely for their skill as lawyers; whether they reflect the policy views of a particular constituency is not (or should not be) relevant. Not surprisingly then, the Federal Judiciary is hardly a cross-section of America. . . The strikingly unrepresentative character of the body voting on today's social upheaval would be irrelevant if they were functioning as judges, answering the legal question whether the American people had ever ratified a constitutional provision that was understood to proscribe the traditional definition of marriage. But of course

the Justices in today's majority are not voting on that basis; they say they are not. And to allow the policy question of same-sex marriage to be considered and resolved by a select, patrician, highly unrepresentative panel of nine is to violate a principle even more fundamental than no taxation without representation: no social transformation without representation. . .

With each decision of ours that takes from the People a question properly left to them—with each decision that is unabashedly based not on law, but on the “reasoned judgment” of a bare majority of this Court—we move one step closer to being reminded of our impotence.

1. What central theme do the excerpts communicate through the author's opinions in the attached passage?

- Domestic relations ought to be the exclusive province of the federal government.
- Judicial decisions should rely on reasoned judgment more than the letter of the law.
- The U.S. system of government is designed to make the people subordinate to the courts.
- The Court is increasingly usurping the People's right to govern themselves.

2. The author of the attached passage characterizes the Court's decision in the case of *Obergefell v. Hodges* as a _____.

- denial of liberties never mentioned in the Constitution
- decision based on law
- protection of prohibitions agreed to by the people
- threat to American democracy

3. The stance Justice Scalia takes in the attached passage is best described as that of _____.

- a cynical politician intent on finding bureaucratic corruption
- an angry voter disappointed at the outcome of a recent election
- a disgruntled government employee unhappy in his current position
- a United States citizen concerned about a growing loss of freedoms

4. The attached passage suggests that by making decisions once left to the states, the Supreme Court _____.

- clarifies which constitutional provisions were ratified
- deviates from the U.S. system of government
- focuses on the people's understanding of liberty
- leaves the states free to adopt whatever laws they like

5. As used in this part of the fifth paragraph of the attached text, “domestic” most nearly means _____.

“[R]egulation of domestic relations is an area that has long been regarded as a virtually exclusive province of the States.

“[T]he Federal Government, through our history, has deferred to state-law policy decisions with respect to domestic relations. . .

- relating to the home or family
- a hired household servant
- indigenous to one’s own country
- no longer wild; tame

6. Which best characterizes the overall relationship between the two attached passages?

- Passage 2 concurs with the stance taken in passage 1.
- Passage 2 illustrates ideas formulated in passage 1.
- Passage 2 opposes the arguments made in passage 1.
- Passage 2 summarizes points detailed in passage 1.

7. Passage 2 (attached) is best characterized as arguing that _____.

- the republic defined by the new U.S. Constitution was a marked improvement over those of the past
- the new U.S. Constitution was imperfect, but additional improvements were certain to be made as the country matured
- the likelihood of a new government enduring over time increases in direct proportion to its popularity
- governments are by nature tyrannical and unjust, so citizenry should simply ratify whatever reasonable governance is offered

8. In passage 1 (attached), the main rhetorical effect of the series of sentences in the first paragraph was to _____.

- propose reasons for changing to the United States Constitution as written at the time
- clarify why Hamilton thought the United States was destined to fail, similar to Greece and Italy
- convey with increasing magnitude the importance of forming a united government
- evidence Hamilton’s total confidence in all republics modeled after ancient Italy and Greece

9. The author of passage 1 (attached) is best characterized as viewing the republics of Greece and Italy with _____.

- marked indifference
- general contempt

- great fondness
- reluctant admiration

10. As used in both attached passages, “faction” most nearly means _____.

- a government
- dissension, discord, or friction
- a group within a larger group
- an organization

11. The main idea the author communicates in the attached passage is that the effects of conditions agreed to by spokespersons attending the Conference of Paris were likely to be _____.

- unusual
- solidifying
- negative
- broken

12. The stance Keynes takes in the attached passage is best described as that of _____.

- an idealist outlining a grandiose society
- a peacemaker calling for an end to hostilities
- a consultant attempting to head off grave errors in judgment
- an accuser seeking full retribution

13. Opinions expressed in the third paragraph of the attached passage imply that _____.

- England is suffering more than continental Europe
- England is forming an alliance with America
- England is different from continental Europe
- England and America are growing in awareness

14. According to the first paragraph of the attached passage, the nature of the economic organization by which Western Europe “has lived for the last half century” is best characterized as _____.

- habituated
- unstable
- natural
- Permanent

15. The attached passage’s final sentence states, A sense of impending catastrophe overhung the frivolous scene; the futility and smallness of man before the great events

confronting him; the mingled significance and unreality of the decisions; levity, blindness, insolence, confused cries from without,—all the elements of ancient tragedy were there. The main rhetorical effect of this sentence is to _____.

- propose four elements to be added to the recently signed treaty to rescue it from an approaching crisis
- clarify Keynes's belief that the treaties signed in Paris were too weak and likely to be broken
- indicate that Keynes thinks peace talks are, by nature, prone to failure for any number of reasons
- convey with increasing intensity the failings of decisions made during the Conference of Paris

16. The information in the attached passage suggests _____.

- China has already resolved most of the challenges it faced in reforming its economic system
- China will soon overcome the challenges it faces in reforming its economic system
- China has yet to form plans to overcome the challenges it faces in reforming its economic system
- China will continue to face many challenges in its efforts to reform its economic system

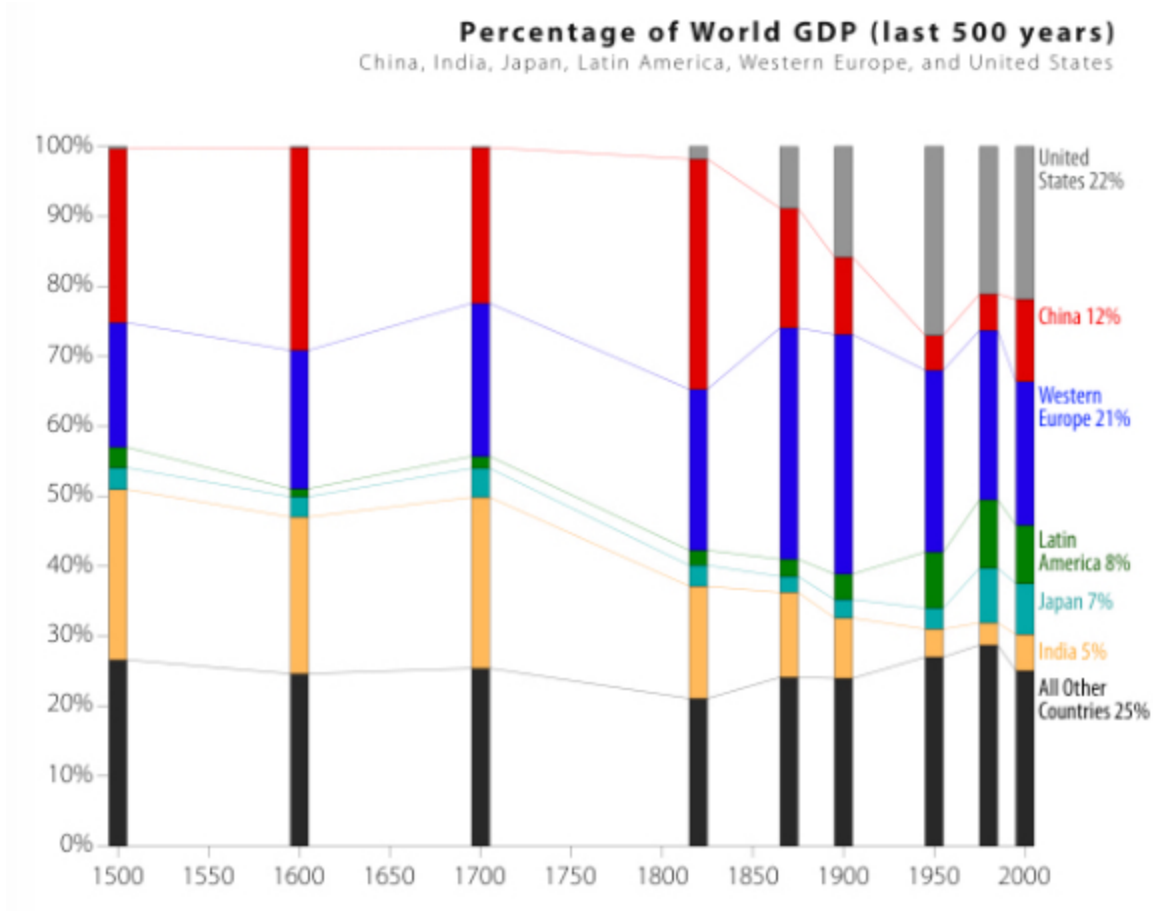
17. Which statement best describes the relationship between China's economic growth and the economic status of its trading partners, as described in the last paragraph of the attached passage?

- China's economic growth is independent of the economic status of its trading partners.
- China's economic growth is impacted by the economic status of its trading partners.
- China's economic growth is a negative factor that only harms the economic status of its trading partners.
- China's economic growth is inversely related to the economic status of its trading partners.

18. The first sentence of the attached passage implies that _____.

- China's recent economic growth is attributable to the stability of its economic system
- centrally planned and market-oriented economic systems share much in common
- China is implementing economic reforms at a rapid pace
- economies that are market-oriented have advantages over those that are centrally planned

19. It can reasonably be inferred from reading the attached passage and referring to the graphic attached that _____.



- the years prior to 1860 are not commonly viewed as part of modern history
- the most recent GDP figures available on China are from the year 2000
- the first time China's GDP was greater than that of the U.S. was in 2014
- there was a reduction in China's GDP between 2000 and 2015

20. As used in this underlined sentence from the third paragraph of the attached text, "arable" most nearly means ____.

China continues to lose arable land because of erosion and economic development.

- compatible with industry
- suitable for farming
- able to be populated
- capable of supporting infrastructure

